An answere

to the examination that is sayde to haue bene made of one named John de Poltrot, calling himself the Lord of Merry, vpon the death of the late Duke of Guyse By the Lord of Chastillon admyrall of Fraunce, and others named in the saide examination.

At Caen. 1562.

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1563.

BIBLIOTHECA REGIA

An Epistle.

A Fewe dayes after the late Duke of Guyse was hurt sodainly before the towne of Orleans, the.xiiij. daye of Februarye laste past there rose a bruyte and rumour, that one called Percy had done the deede at the suggestion of the Lord Admirall which was then and is yet at Caen in Normandy Lieutenant in the kynges army under the charge of the prynce of Conde. Whereat the sayd Lord Admirall was not muche moued, for as muche as he thought that this slaunder (as many other) woulde vanishe away of it selfe. But since by the solicitation of a certain man called La Vallette, maister of the campe of the light horsemen vnder the sayde Duke of Guyse, goyng about to disionite the Almaines, and to put the Amirals armie into an vprore and trouble: a copie

of the confession beynge caste abrode in the sayd army, ascribed vnto one called Iohn de Poltrot, naming himselfe Senior of Merey, & signed by the hand of one called Valuant, Scriuener or Notarie: by the which it appeareth that the said Poltrot being examined by the quene mother in persone, & in the presence of certaine lords of the counsell, & knightes of the order of the kings maiestie, dyd greatly charge the said Lorde admyrall, & certayne other Lords, & also certayne Ministers of the worde of God, to haue induced & allured by wordes & money the saide Poltrot to that which is abouesayde. The sayde Lorde admyrall hauyng respect & regard to the trouth & to his honour, can not attribute such an inuented accusation but to ỹ enemies of the rest & quietnes of this realme, cõtinuing in their wicked wil & purpose, which is wholly to ouerthrow & destroye the said Lorde admyrall with all those that professe the gospell bringing them into hatred

to

to all the worlde by ſuch craftes & pra-
ctiſes: wherynto he meaneth ſpedely to
ſeeke a remedye. And for this cauſe not
regarding the ſubteltyes & decrytes of
the aforeſaid enemies, but truſting in
God & in his owne good conſcience hath
not ſticked to publiſhe the ſayd confeſſi-
on word for word, adioyning therevnto
his anſweres vppon euery article con-
teyned therein. Protesting before god,
to anſwere it before all Iudges in chri-
ſtendom that be not ſuſpected, but in-
different, & offering him ſelf to main-
taine his innocencie in all ſortes & ma-
ners reaſonable & meete in the place &
degree that he hath in this realme: to
thentent that ſuche calumnie & ſaun-
der being diſcouered, & the trouth ha-
uyng vanquiſhed lyes, the faultye and
culpable maye be puniſhed, as
the deede ſhall require.

(**)

The .xxi. daye of

February 1562. in the campe at saincte Hyllaries besyde S. Mesmyn.

BEfore the Quéene mother of the kinge, my lordes the Cardinall of Bourbon Duke of Etampes, prince of Mantua, ỳ Erle of Gruyeres the lordes of Partigues, of Sanſac, of Tyyierre, of Loſſe, and the bysshoppe of Lymoge, reſpectiuely lordes of the priuie counſell of the king, and knightes of the order being than preſent. Was brought one John de Poltrot, naming himſelfe ſeniour of merey borne in the country of Angoumois in the lordſhip of Ambeterre of the age of xxvi. yeares or there about: who being commaunded by the ſaid Quéene to declare truly the cauſe of his emprisonement who prouoked him to ſhoote ỳ dagge wherwith the Duke of Guyſe was hurt on thurſday laſt: what his entent was, or theirs which had cauſed him to doe it,

and

and what money he receyued for it or trusted for to receyue. Sayd and confessed kneelynge on hys knees before the Queene and askynge pardon these wordes folowing.

Deposition or confession.

That is to say, y about the moneth of June or July laste. The Prince of Conde beyng at Orleans, and the lord of Soubize in his company whose seruaunt he is, he went to the said towne of Orleans.

Answere.

The Lord admyrall answereth truly and before God, that he knoweth not when the sayd Poltrot arriued at Orleans, nor when he went from thence, and remembreth not that euer he saw him nor heard him speake in any maner or sort, vntyll January last by occasion which afterward shalbe declared.

Deposition.

In the which place the Lord of Fenqueres the yong gouernour of Roy-

Captaine Wyon, came vnto hym, and sayde: that heretofore they had knowen hym to be a man to execute a matter or enterprise, and that yf he would take in hande to do a good exployte, which should tourne to the seruice of God, and the honour of the kyng, and the comfort of his people, he shoulde be greatlye commended and esteemed. And then the Deponent requiring them to declare more, and to open vnto him what enterprise they woulde speake of assuryng them that for his parte, he woulde be alwayes ready to do seruyce to the kynge: they than knowynge hys good will, they remitted hym to the Lorde admyrall, & tolde hym that he shoulde gyue him to vnderstande more at large the matter that they had moued vnto hym.

Aunswere.

As touchyng the Captayne Wyon, the sayd lorde admyrall declareth that he

he neuer heard him speake of the sayde Poltrot, and it is not lyke to be true, that if the sayde Wyon had knowen of any such practise he would haue holde his peace synce that he was in the seruice of the Duke of Guyse where he is now dead. And as concernynge Feuqueres, the sayde Lorde Admyrall remembreth well that aboute the latter ende of Januarye laste, and neuer before, he tolde hym, speakynge of the sayde Poltrot newly comme from Lyons, that sometyme he had knowen hym a man of seruyce, in the tyme of the warre in Pycardye, whych was the cause that the Lorde Admyrall shortlye after the reporte of the sayde Feuqueres, employed hym as anone shall be declared. And as for the reste, the sayde Lorde Admyrall doubteth not but the saide Feuqueres can well answere for his owne dedes.

Deposition.

And agayne, two or three dayes after, the sayde men Feuqueres and Bzion presented him to the sayd Lord of Chastillon admyrall beyng lodged at Orleans nigh vnto the house of the prince of Conde. And the sayde Chastillon was then in a low hall vnder the saide lodgings: after the sayd Feuqueres & Bzion had presented him to the sayde lord of Chastillon, he commaunded all that were in the hall to depart, whiche thing they did. And also the said Feuqueres and Bzion departed, and he remained alone with the saide Lord of Chastillon, who asked him by these or such like words, yf he would take vpon him to go into the campe of the kyng, (which the sayde lord of Chastillon called the Duke of Guyse campe, beyng then beside Bogency) & that if he wold enterprise to go to ỳ sayd campe about the matter that he would declare vnto him, he shoulde doe God, the kyng and the common wealth great seruice: and the sayde deponent askyng hym what

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enterprise it was, he said vnto him that yf he wouldе venter to go to the sayde campe to kyll the sayde Duke of Guise (whiche persecuted the faythfull) he should do a meritorius worke toward God and man. The sayde Deponent hearing these words, which semed vnto him more then he was able to doe or performe, he sayd vnto the sayd lord of Chastillon, that he durst not take vpon hym so great a matter. The which answere being made, the sayde Lorde of Chastillon pressed hym no further: but prayed him to keepe this talke secrete, and not to vtter it to any man.

Aunswere.

The contents of this article are vterly false and imagined: wherevppon the said Lorde admirall sheweth first that in all this confessiō he is called but Lord of Chastillon, which is a name ỹ he telleth not scorne of, or disdaineth it: but yet that declareth manifestly out of what shoppe thys confession com-

meth

commeth, seynge he is not so called in no place of all thys Realme nor elles where, but by theym that pretend by suche crafte to berine and spoyle hym of the state and degree that appertayneth vnto hym.

And secondly these wordes. The campe of the kyng whyche the sayde Lorde of Chastillon calleth the campe of ꝑ Duk of Guyse being then besyde Rogency, shew sufficiently that whosoeuer wrot or endyted thys deposition of the poore Deponent was to muche in a passyon or affection for to do his occupatiō wel, and went about no other thing but to seeke how he myght not leaue out any thinge that myght charge the said lord Admirall, were it to the purpose or not. Finally when it is sayde that the Lord Admirall for to induce the sayde Poltrot, alledged vnto him ꝑ he should doe a meritorious worke to god & man who seeth not plainly that al this talke was forged by some one all togyther ignorant of the true religion, ꝑ whych

the

ysaid lord admiral professeth: He shuld at the least haue considered what the doctryne of the Gospel is, & how much it condempneth the wordes to Merite and meritorious workes, before he toke in hand to conterfete the talke of a gospeler. But behold howe it fareth wyth false witnesses by the Just iudgement of God, that by their owne mouthe they be conuinced.

Deposition.

And synce the sayde Lord of Soubize departynge from the sayde towne of Orleans for to goe to Lyons, the sayde Deponent accompanyed hym and there contynuallye remayned wyth hym, vntyll about fiftene dayes after the battaylle foughte besyde Dreux.

Aunswere.

The sayde Lord Admyrall knoweth nothyng of all thys.

Deposition.

That

That the sayde lorde of Chastillon, wrot to ỳ sayde Soubize being at Lions ỳ he shuld send him the said deponent.

Aunswere.

The sayd lord Admirall wrote then many times to lions to the lord of Soubize: but vppon hys lyfe & his honour it shall not be found that euer he wrote, that the said poltrot shuld be sent vnto him whom he knoweth not whether euer he saw or knew before, & thought nothyng vpon him.

Deposition.

And that in deede the said lord of Soubize dispatched him with letters to goe to the said lord of Chastillõ, & gaue him a packet to carye not telling him what he wrot vnto the said lord of Chastillõ. And being arriued nygh vnto ỳ towne of Celles in Berry in a place named Villefranche, he found the lord of Chastillon there to whome he delyuered the sayde packet of letters.

Aunswere.

The

The lord Admiral remembreth wel that it is so: but so farre of is it ꝑ it was to employ the said Poltret about thys matter now in question, that contrary wise the said lord of Soubize sent word that he shuld send him againe, bycause he was a man of seruice, as the letters shall declare and specifye.

Deposition.

And when he had sene the letters he commaunded him to go to tarrye hym at Orleans and so he dyd.

Answere.

The sayd lord Amirall sent him not to Orleans, but he gaue hym leaue to goe thyther, bycause he sayde he had busynes to doe there.

Deposition.

And shortly after the retourne of the said lord of Chastillon vnto Orleans, this Deponent presenting himself to ꝑ said lord of Chastillon to know & vnderstand his pleasure: he asked him if he remembred the talke that he had wt hym

the

the former before: & this Deponent answering said ỳ he remembred it verye wel but it was to venturous a thinge. The said lord of Chastillon saide vnto him, ỳ if he wold execute the said enterprise he should do the most notable and most honorable thing for the seruice of god & the comō welth ỳ euer was done & gaue him courage to put the same in execution frō the which ons againe he wold haue excused himselfe. But than euen at ỳ instant came in Theodore de Beze, a another minister of a smal stature somwhat bigge, wt a blacke berd, ỳ which spake vnto him many things demaunding him if it were not a blessed thing to cary his crosse in this world as Christ had caried it for vs: & after many discourses & words, they said vnto him ỳ he shuld be the most happiest man in this world, if he wold execute the enterprise which ỳ lord Admiral had moued vnto him bicause he should ryd a tirant out of this world, for the which acte he shuld win heauē & be among ỳ blessed saints if he died in so iust & good a quarel.

By the which persuations the said deponent graunted vnto them, & saide to the lord of Chastillon, ỹ he was ready to consent to al the sayings of the saide ministers; and that he woulde than the wyll of God, and woulde go to the campe of the said Duke of Guyse, to endeuour to put the said enterprise in execution. For the which he was greatly commended & esteemed as well of the sayd Lord of Chastillon, as of the sayd Ministers: & thei told him that he was not alone that had done such exployts, because there were many other ỹ had taken vpon them the like charge: & namely ỹ saide lord of Chastillō said vnto him, ỹ there were more then fifty other gentilmen of good houses, that had promised him to put in effect other lyke matters: and furthwith caused his steward to geue him .rr. crowns, for to go to the campe at Vellas, where then the said Duke of Guyse was, to thende he might thinke & deuise ỹ meane & way how he might bring his purpose to pas.

The ſayd lorde admirall anſwereth truly before god & man, that the forſaid words be falſely & wickedly inuented. And furthermore, to thentent that all the world may know how he behaued himſelf towarde the ſayd Duke of Guyſe, he declareth frankly & freely, that before theſe laſt tumults, he knew ſome that were determined to kyll the ſayd Duke of Guyſe becauſe thei were diſpleaſed with him. But ſo farre of is it that he inticed them thervnto or allowed it, that rather contrariwiſe he did diſuade and tourne them from their wicked purpoſes, as madame de Guyſe her ſelfe knoweth whome he ſufficiently aduertiſed therof in tyme and place where. True it is that after the murder at Vaſſy, after taken of armur for to maintain ỹ authorite of the kynges decrees and lawes, and to defend the poore oppreſſed men agaynſt the violence of the ſayd Duke of Guyſe

and

and his adherentes, he hath counted & pursued them as publyke enemyes of God, of the kyng, & of the rest & quietnesse of this realme. But vppon hys lyfe & hys honour, it shall neuer be founde that he allowed that anye man shoulde attempt on this sort vppon the person of the sayde Duke, vntyll he was certainelye aduertised that the sayde Duke of Guyse & the Marshall Saincte Andre had hired & subborned certain persons to kil the prince of Conde, him, & his brother Dandelot: as the sayde Lorde Admyrall not longe ago declared amplye vnto the Quene before Paris, and synce vnto the Constable at Orleans. And seyng thys, he confesseth that synce ỳ tyme when he heard one say that yf he could he would kyll the Duke of Guyse, yea euen in his campe, he dyd not dissuade or withholde hym from it: But vppon hys lyfe and honoure, it shall neuer be founde that he soughte or induced anye man to do it, neyther by wordes, money

or promises by himselfe, nor by anye other directly nor indirectly. And touching the twentye Crownes whereof mencion is made in the article before, he acknowledgeth it to be true, that at his last retourne to Orleans about the end of January last, after that the saide Fenqueres had tolde him that he had knowen the sayde Poltrot for a man of seruice, he determined to employ and vse hym for the vnderstandynge of newes from the campe of his sayd enemies: & for this cause he gaue hym .xx. Crownes, hauing no other words or talke w̄ him, nor ons making any mencion of killing or not killing the sayde Duke of Guyse. For namely if the said Lorde admyrall had had any suche enterprise in hand, he would in no wyse haue trusted the said Poltrot: for when he sent him to ẏ campe of ẏ said duke of Guyse about ẏ matter foresaid, it was not wout mistrusting him, for asmuch as it seemed vnto him that he made the meane & way to easie to enter into the

sayde

sayde campe, as the saide lord admirall declared vnto Monsieur de Grammont, who at that tyme was present, & neuertheleſſe he letted not to send him for to vnderſtande newes of the sayde campe, saying theſe very wordes that he ſhould be rather tryed & proued than nourysſhed & maineteyned.

Vpon this ſame article alſo, Theodore de Beze declareth moſt truly as followeth for his dyſcharge before all chriſtendome. To wete that seyng manye ſo animated & moued againſt the sayde Duke of Guyſe for the murther committed at Vaſſy, yet he was neuer of the mynde or aduiſe at that tyme to proceede againſt the sayde Duke, but by way of ordinarye iuſtice: where of he calleth them to witnes that haue ſeene & heard him ſpeake at that time, which alſo was ỳ cauſe why he was at Ponteaux in the cõpany of other appoynted by the reformed church of Paris: for to require iuſtice for ỳ ſaid murder at the kings maieſtie, & the quene his mother

& of ẏ late king of Nauer, beseching thē most hūbly to prouide wͥ al diligence against the troubles which alredy thretened this realme, & are hapned since in dede. And here vpō the answer ẏ it pleased ẏ quene to make him, was such, that thei of ẏ reformed church wer cōtented & satisfied wͥ it, for the hope ẏ was geuē them ẏ good & spedy iustice shuld be don vpō the trāsgressers. But sone after the said duke of Guise & his cōplices hauig taken armour, & the matter brought to such a state, ẏ right & iustice could take no more place; & which is more ẏ persōs of the king & quene being vsed & handled as euery man knoweth, he cōfesseth to haue at ẏ time aswell publikly in his sermōs, as by letters & words warned & aduertised aswell ẏ prince of Conde as thadmirall & al other lords, & men of all cōditiōs & qualities professing ẏ gospel, of their duty, for to brīg thē to maintein by al meanes possible, ẏ authoritie of ẏ kings lawes & ordinances, & thinnocencie of ẏ pore oppressed. And since he hath

alwayes

alwayes cõtinued, & yet now cõtinueth in the same minde: exhorting not wtstanding euery man to vse his armour and weapons wt the most modestie yt is possible, & to seke next to the honour of god peace & concord aboue al things, so that thei suffer not thẽselues to be deceiued. Of the which things he taketh to witnes all those which haue hard him publikly or particularly, & such as wyll say the trouth. And furthermore as concerning ỳ Duke of Guyse, because he hath taken him for the chief authour & maintainour of these troubles, he confesseth to haue manye tymes desyred & prayed God, eyther to tourne the hart of the sayde Duke of Guyse (whyche thyng not withstanding he coulde neuer hope for) or elles to deliuer this realme from him. Wherof he calleth to witnesse all those ỳ haue hard his sermõs & praiers, and namely madame de Ferrare knoweth what he tolde her both wt mouth and heart, and what he hath often tymes wrytten to her herof.

But it shall not be founde that euer he named the said Duke of Guise publikly, not ẏ euer he spake to the said Poltrot in person, nor by any other, nor that euer he knew him, or had to do wͤ hym in any thing, & then muche lesse that he did counsell him to do it. The sayde Theodore de Beze sayth more, ouer ẏ it shall neuer be found that euer he hyred or suborned any other man to do this deede, wherein he acknowledgeth not withstanding a iust iudgement of god, threatening the like or greater punishment vnto all the sworne enemies of his holy ghospell, and those that are the causes of so much miserie & calamitie in this realme. And for the verifiing of his answere, beside the forsayde things, he taketh his aduantage vpon ẏ very termes ascribed vnto ẏ sayd Poltrot deponent. For thāks be to god, he is not so ignorant or euill instructed in his charge & calling, as to apply ẏ scripture so euil in that which is there said, to cary his crosse, & muche lesse to saye,

that

that men wynne heauen. And therfore he sendeth all this confession into the forge from whence it came, being readie also to submitte himselfe generally and particularly, concerning al that he hath done & sayd in this present warre, to the knowledge & vnderstandynge of all vnsuspect Iudges, as well in thys realme as ells where: vpon paine to be punished as the most wicked offendour vpon the earth, yf he be founde a lyer, or culpable in this aunswere.

Depolition.

The which rr. crownes he receiued, and came to the said campe at Mellas where he presented himselfe vnto the sayd Duke of guise, and sayde that he repented him selfe that he had caryed armoure agaynste the kynge, and that he would from hence forthe render hymselfe vnto hym. The whyche thynge the sayde Duke of Guyse toke in good parte, and saydc that he was wellcome. And when the said Duke

departed from Bellas to goe to Blois thys Deponent went thyther and returned wyth hym.

Aunswere.

The said Lord Admirall beleueth it to be so, forasmuch as the said Poltrot told him the same thinge, not at Orleans where he neuer sawe him synce he sent hym to the saide Campe to knowe & vnderstand newes: but in a place called Beaufville, as afterwarde shall be declared. And the saide Lord Admyrall remembreth well that the said Poltrot bringing report of that he had sene and knowen in the said campe, said that he went to Beung, to one whom he called senior de Lestange who presented him to the said Duke of Guise.

Deposition.

And certaine daies after, he returned to Orleans to the said Lord of Chastillon and there excused himself vnto him from taking in hand so great a charge bycause that the saide Duke of Guyse vsed

bled not to goe out of his house, but w̄ a great companye. But the sayde Lord of Chastillon encouraged hym more then he dyd before: & said he knew well ynough what he had promysed hym and that he might not make any excuse in the matter. And further more caused the sayde Theodore de Beze and the other minister whyche before had spoken to hym, to gyue hym dyuers instructions, whyche so troubled hys mynd, that he accorded and consented to do what they would. And for to confyrme him in thys wycked mynde and purpose the saide Lorde of Chastillon gaue hym with hys owne handes a C. crownes of the sunne in a paper, for to bie him a horse, if his were not good ynough for to saue himselfe after he had done the deede. The whiche .C. crownes this Deponent receiued, and came to the sayde campe at Vellas, to fynde the meanes to put the sayde enterpryse in effecte.

Aunswere.

It

It is true that the said Poltrot comming againe to Orleans to make hys report of things, found not the said lord Admyral there, who was already gone on hys iourney towarde Normandye which thing is sufficient to proue that the rest of the former article, is no lesse false & inuented. True it is that Monsieur Mandelot hauinge heard hys report of newes at Orleans sent hym to the said lord Admirall his brother then being arriued at ỳ village of Neufuille fyre or seuen leagues from Orleans, in his said viage to Normandy, accompanied wᵗ Monsieur de Traues, of whom he sent him word that he was determined to stay the said Poltrot because he semed to make a doubtfull and an vncertaine reporte of newes. Yet neuertheles the said Lord Admirall hauyng heard hym Iudged that would serue their turne for to vnderstand certayne newes of the enemyes campe: and for this cause he delyuered him ỳ hundred crownes, whereof there is question,

aswell

aſwel for to horſe himſelf better, as for to vſe diligence requiſite in ſuch aduertiſementes, and commaunded him to repaire in his abſence to the ſaid Monſieur Mandelot his brother: More, the ſaid lord Admirall remembreth well now, that the ſaid Poltrot went ſo far in making his report of newes that he ſaid it was an eaſy thing to kyl the ſaid Duke of Guyſe. But the ſaid lord Admirall ſtaid not vppon that talke, becauſe he thought it a thyng to vain and folyſhe: and vppon his lyfe and hys honour, he neuer opened his mouthe to prouoke hym to take it vpon hym.

Vppon the ſelfe ſame Article Theodore de Beze anſwereth that he cannot remember that he euer ſawe the ſayde Poltrot and he neuer knew him nor knoweth hym yet and muche leſſe that he euer ſpake to hym about ſuche an enterpriſe.

Depoſition.

And ſynce, the ſayd Duke of Guyſe beyng

being come wͭ the armie in thys place of S. Hylary besyde S. Mesmine, he followed him, hauing bought of Mõsieur de la Mauuoissimere a spanishe Genet at the saide place of Messas for ẏ sume of a C. crownes that he gaue him & the horse whereuppon he rode before. And lodged certaine daies in the Castell of Corneil .ii. or .iii. leagues frõ the cãpe at s. Hilaryes, differring to execute the said enterprise vntill he saw the towne of Orleans sore laide vnto, & that they went about by al meanes to take it, & fearing than ẏ many honest men being in the towne, shuld be slain & spoiled, he fully determined wͭ himself to kepe his promise. And to do this act, on thursday last ẏ xviii. of this present moneth, after he had dined in a ferme halfe a league frõ the house where the saide Duke of Guise was lodged, it came into hys mind to execute ẏ day ẏ said enterprise & in dede the said Duke passing the ryuer of Leret for to go to Pontereau, he

accom

accompanied him & folowed him to the said Ponteriau: & than returned by the brydge & village of Olyuet, where the Suyssers were lodged, & there taryed the coming of the said Duke of Guyse at the passage of the sayd riuer of Leret intending whether he were well or euill accompanied, to execute his enterpryse, as he dyd. And hearing a trōpet blowen at the retourne of the sayde Duke of Guyse, whan he woulde enter into the boote to passe the water, he approched neere vnto the Ryuer and after that the sayde Duke of Guyse was landed beynge accompanyed onelye wyth one gentyllman that wente before, and another that spake vnto hym rydynge vppon a lyttle Mulette, he folowed hym behynde, and whan he approched nigh vnto hys lodginge, at the corner of a strete where there were manye wayes turning this way & ẏ way he shote hys

dagge

dagge at him charged wͭ thre pellets, a bout vi. or vii. pase of, thinking to strike him in the shulder, bycause he thought he had bene armed on the body: and by & by set spurres to his spanishe genet wherdpon he rode, and saued himselfe swiftly, passing ouer muche wood that was cut down, & rode that night about x. leagues in the countrey, thinking to conuey himselfe far frō Orleans. But god would that the darkenesse of the night turned hym out of his way, and came againe to the village of Oliuet into the myddes of ẏ gard of Suissers where one of the sayd Suyssers spake vnto him these wordes, Houardot. Un derstandyng those wordes he knewe it was the gard of the Suyssers, & drewe backe and rode on the spurre vntill the next day nyne of the clocke in the mor- nyng. And perceyuynge that his horse was wery and sore trauailed, he lod- ged in a ferme where he rested vntyll the next morrowe, that he was taken and brought as prisoner.

Aunswere

Answer.

This article appertaineth particularly to the said Poltrot, and therfore he referreth it vnto hym, praising god in the meane while for all hys iuste iudgementes.

Deposition.

And vpon that, which the said quene mother examined him whether any other were consenting to the said enterprise, beside ỳ lord of Chastillon & the said ministers. He said ỳ he was neuer spokē to of it, by any other persōs thē by the said lord of Chastillon, the sayd Theodore de Beze and his fellow: but yet he thinketh that he lord of Rochefoucaul knew some thing of the matter, forasmuch as when he arryued at the said Villefranche, beside the town of Celles: the sayde Rochefoucaule shewed him a good countenance, and said he was welcome.

Answer.

This confession is manifestly cō-

trary to that which before he declared against Feuqueres and Capitain Bri on, and yet wrongfully and without cause, as the said lord Admyrall thynketh. And as for that whichconcerneth the erle of Rochefoucault he answereth truely, that if he had knowen any thing of such an enterprise he woulde not denye it: but he neuer hearde any talke of any suche thing before it was done, and referreth it also to the iudgement of all bryght men, whether the coniecture of the saide Deponent bee well grounded or not: and whether it appeareth not that the sayde Poltrot hath beene rather procured to accuse the said erle of Rochefoucault by som manner of meane than to tellthe truth.

Deposition

And as touching the Prince of Conde, beyng thereupon demaunded saith he neuer knewe that he was privy to the sayde enterprise neyther that he knewe any thyng of it, and thynketh in his conscience that he neuer knewe of it. But contrary wyse the fyrst time

that

that the sayd lord of Chastillon spake of this enterprise, the said Deponent asked hym if the prince of Conde wold haue him to do it, the said lord Admyrall aunswered, and said, that he needed not aske any thing as concerning the prince of Conde.

Answer.

The sayde lorde Admirall perceyueth by this article the craste and subtiltye of his enemies, goyng about by al meanes to separate hym and al this army from the Prince of Conde lieue tenaunt generall for the kynge in the said army. But he is assured that such practises by the grace of God, shall returne and fall vppon their owne heades. Furthermore he douteth him not but will beare alwayes witnes of the integritye, honestye, and innocencye of the sayde prynce, not onely in thys deede, but also in all that is taken in hande done, saide, or written by hym in this warre, and denieth plainly and expressely the ende of the saide article referring hymselfe to that he hath answered before.

Deposition.

Likewise he declareth that Monsieur Dandelot neuer spake to hym of it, nor the lord of Soubize, but contrarye wise when the said Deponent declared vnto him the first talk that the lord of Chastillon hadde with hym, of which he hath before spoken, the sayd Soubize said vnto him, that it oughte not to be done by that meanes, for yf God would punish the saide Duke of Guyse he wold do it another way, not vsyng such maner of doyngs.

Answer.

The sayd lord Admirall thinketh in his conscience, that the saide Poltrot had neuer suche talke with the sayde Soubize, for he neuer vnderstode any thing therof: and also douteth nothing of the innocency of Monsieur Dandelot his brother nor of ỹ said Soubize.

Deposition.

And also the said Deponent hath auertised and warned the quene to beware and to take hede to her selfe, because

cause ẏ synce the battail besyde Dreux the said lord of Chastillon, with the capitains and souldiors being with him beare her euill wil, saying, that she be traied them, bicause she promised thē before Paris many thinges which she hath not perfourmed.

Answer.

The said lord Admirall saieth, that this aduertisement and warning can not procede but out of a wicked mind, which desireth nothyng elles but the continuāce of the present miseries and calamities of this realme: & for proofe of his fidelity & faithfulnes he cannot haue better witnes thā the quene her self, with ẏ seruices that he hath done heretofore, protesting before god that by his grace no euill entreating made him euer nor shal neuer make him forget the duty and obedience that he oweth vnto their maiesties & to his countrey, & he douteth not but the intent & mind of the lordes, capitaines, and other of his army is so likewise.

Deposition.

Sayeng more ouer, that there wer many persons, as well in the traine of the court as folowing this campe, which were sent by the saide lorde of Chastillon to execute the lyke enterprises: yet he neuer hearde them named, whom the Lorde of Chastillon would haue to be kylled: but onely in generall woordes, he hearde hym say, that after the said duke of Guise shoulde be kylled, he woulde cause the lyke to be doone to all those that successiuely would rule and leade the army, and also that there muste bee slayne sixe or seuen knyghtes of the order, not otherwyse namyng them, but that he vnderstode it commonly by the capitaynes and souldiors beyng at Orleance, which hated greatly the lorde Duke of Montpensier, and monsieur de Sansac: and that if the sayd duke of Guyse were slain together with the sayde knyghtes of the order, to whome they bare euyll wyll, they woulde than come to the courte to submytte theym selues to the grace and pardon of the kynge,

and

and would doo what he would commaund them. Answere.

The sayde lorde admyrall answereth to this article, as vnto the nert before it, leauing it to al mē to iudge that know him whether it smell lyke a trouthe, that in case he had taken in hande suche enterprises he would haue discouered theym vnto suche a man as the sayd Poltrot is. And as touchyng that he sayth, that he heard it sayde of the capitaynes and souldiours, the sayd lord admirall ought not to aunswere to it, and yet beleueth it not to bee true, specially seynge there is not so greate occasion nor apparēce of hatred against them which are named in the said Article.

Deposition.

He saith moreouer, that being in ỹ towne of Bloys with the said duke of Guyse, whyle the Campe was at Pellas, he found in the gardens of ỹ said towne nigh vnto ỹ king, who thā playd at the mallet & the ball, a mā of a mean stature wᵗ a red berd, red hose and a ierkyn of lether cut, which had

a dagge ready charged and spande in his hande, whome sometyme he had seene at Orleance, in the saide lord of Chastillons hall.

Answere.

The sayd lorde Admyrall can not tell what the sayd Poltrot myght see at Bloys, and therefore ought not to answere to it: but he knoweth verye well, that he and all hys army beare accordyng to their duetie, a singuler affection, obedience and reuerence to his maiestie, as his true and faithfull subiectes and seruants, and that they haue nothyng in this worlde so deare vnto theym, as the prosperitie and wealth of their prince and kyng.

Deposition.

And furthermore, that he sawe in this campe fower men well horsed, whose names he knewe not, but he knoweth them if he see them, whych iver in the hall at Orleance when he spake with the said lord of Chastillon the laste tyme, and the sayde lorde of Chastillon asked him, if he would be knowen vnto the said men, who also

had

had promised him to execute other enterprises. But this deponent fearyng to be descried, prayed the sayd lord of Chastillon not to discouer hym vnto them: And sayde, that if they woulde geue him libertie to walke about the campe, he trusted to fynde them out, and to shewe them.

Answére.

The said lord Admirall saith that ca lumnie and false report was forged in the same shoppe that the other were, and for to haue certaine & true knowledge therof, they shold haue suffred ỹ said Poltrot to walk about thecampe with a good & sure gard about hym.

Deposition

Being demanded what the said lord of Chastillon departing frõ Orleance to go into Normandie ment to doo & worke: said, that he purposed to go to ioyne with the Englishemen, and to bring them to Orleance: & that at his departyng he promised his brother monsieur D'andelot, that if the said duke of Guise wold come to besiege the said towne of Orleance, he wold

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come with succour, and wold seke to gyue hym battaile.

Ansvvere.

The sayd lord Admirall answereth that his enemies sekyng so curiously all meanes to destroy hym, vnder the colour and pretext of iustice, shoulde haue sought out thynges by some other of his counsell, than by the sayd Poltrot, or other suche as he is: And also the said Poltrot was not at Orleance whan the sayd lorde Admirall departed from thence at the lest that he knewe of, and therfore could not testifie any thynge but by heresaye, what he had promysed vnto the sayd monsieur Dandelot his brother. And furthermore, the sayd lorde admirall sayth, that it shall not be founde that he euer dyd it, and that he had rather dye, than to thynke ones to doo any thyng contrary to the dutie of a true and faithfull subiecte and seruant of his maiestie: as he wil shewe it at all tymes when nede shall require.

Deposition.

Furthermore, beyng demanded of the

the maner of the deathe of the late marshal saint Andre, and after what sort he was killed, said that he heard say at Orleance of many gentilmen that forasmuch as the sayd Marshall Saint Andre had first geue his faith to a yonge gentylman of a highe stature with a lyttle abern bearde: and afterwarde the seconde tyme had geuen his said faith to the prince of Portian, the said gentylman to whom he had fyrst geuen his fayth, killed hym with his dagge: and more the said deponent sayde not. The mynute he hath signed.

The.xrii. of the said moneths and yere, this present confession or depositions being made yesterday by the said John de Poltrot, before ỹ quene and the lordes of the counsell, and knightes of the order were red and repeted agayne to the saide Poltrot, in the whiche his confession after an othe by him take, he persisted, saying that it contained the truth: and in witnesse therof, signed euery leafe of the minute, thus signed. P. Maluaur.

An-

If the said Poltrot, either for feare of death, or by any other subornatiō or persuasion hath persisted in his false & inuented confessions: The said lorde admirall, & they that by them be charged with him, haue more reason to persist in their answers which conteine the pure and plaine truth. And for as much as the verificatiō of all this matter dependeth vpon the bringing of the said Poltrot face to face before the whom he hath charged, the said lorde admirall with the other aforenamed, after hauinge refused the courtes of parliament, & all other iudges which haue manifestly declared themselues their enemies in these present tumultes: most humbly beseech the kings maiestie, to appoint & cōmaund ỹ the said Poltrot may bee wel & safely kept, in place where he may neither be put in feare nor suborned, vntill it shal plese god to graūt the long desired and necessary peace in this realme: and that by this means the whole matter may be verified and ended before vpright &

vn-

vnsuspect iudges: and in case that any of the said iudges of the parliament or any other will forthwith procede in iudgement and execution of the sayde Poltrot, and by that meanes take frō the said lord admiral & from al thother the true meane & way to iustify themselues of the said fals accusations, they protest of their integritie, innocency, & honest reputation, and stand against the said iudges and againste all other to whom it shal appertayne.

Geuen at Caen in Normādy the 12. day of Marche. 1562.

Thus signed.

Chastillon. La Rochefoucault.

Theo. de Beze.

A copy of the letter sente to the quene by the said lord Admiral with the foresaid aunswer.

MAdame two daies since I saw an examination whiche was made to one John Poltrot calling himself the lord of Merey, the 21. day of the last moneth: who confesseth

to

to haue hurt the duke of Guise, by the which also he chargeth ý I should procure him or rather forced hi to do that he hath done: & because it is the thing that I moste feare in this worlde least the said Poltrot shold be put to execution before the truth of this matter be knowen, I most humbly beseche your maiestie to commaund that he may be well kepte. And in the meane tyme I haue set forth certaine articles vpon euery one of his, which me thinketh de serue an answer, the whiche I sende vnto your maiestye by this trompet: whereby all men of good iudgement may almost be certified of the matter. And more ouer I saye, that it shal not be found that euer I sought that man nor any other to do such a deede. But rather contrarywyse I haue alwayes stopte and not suffered asmuch as laye in me, that suche enterprises shoulde hee putte in execution. And thereof haue I often tymes talked wyth the Cardinall of Lorayne, and Madame de Guyse, and namely with your maiestye: whome it maye please to be re-

mem-

membred howe contrary I haue bene thereunto, sauyng within this fyue or fyre monthes, that I haue not muche ben against those which shewed themselues to haue such a mynde. And that hathe bene synce there came certayne personnes whiche I wyll name when tyme shall serue, which sayd, that they were procured to come to kyll me, as it shal please your maiesty to remember what I sayde vnto you at Paris, going out of the Wyll where we commoned together: whiche thyng also I haue tolde vnto the Constable, and neuertheles I may say, and that truly, that for myne owne part, I neuer sought procured, nor practised wyth any man aboute suche a matter. And I wyll reporte me vnto all those whiche haue sene suche enterprises putte in effecte beefore me, howe muche I mocked suche doynges. And beecause I will not trouble your maiesty wyth any longer letter, I most humblye beeseeche the same ones againe

to

to commaunde that the saide Poltrot be wel and diligently kepte for to verifye of this matter the truthe. Also that beeyng brought to Parys, as I heare saye, I feare leste they of the court of parliament wil put him to execution, and al for to leaue this calumnye and false accusation in my necke: or els lest they should procede against me for this deede, which thing they can not do beyng my parties and refused as they be. And in ỹ meane time think not that which I say, is because I am sory for the duke of Guise: for I think it is the greatest good turne that euer could happen to this realme, and to ỹ church of god, and particularly to me and to al my house, and also if it please your maiesty it shalbe the mean to set this realme at rest and peace, whiche thing al we of this army desyre, according to ỹ whiche we haue required of you, as sone as we were aduertised of the death of the said duke of Guyse. Madame I praye god geue you moste parfit helth with happy and long life.

From Caen the. 12. of March. 1562.

FINIS.